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Emergency Eye Wash

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PATRICIA SPEARS JONES

Emergency Eye Wash

Accidents will happen, remember
how quickly an argument turned to emergency.
Was it the price of something or the time needed
to clean out the garage? Was it anything important—
no sex for weeks or an unfamiliar shade
of nail polish streaking an old pair of jeans?

Who started the heat in this kitchen?
And why are we waiting for the doctor to emerge?

My eye you screamed.
My eye!

And off we drove to hospital. Your hand sheltering
the side of you I still loved.
Your eye drowned in toxins.
Where did they come from? What had you rubbed?
I hated your being in danger.
The very idea of you half-blind.

The doctor takes you away from me.
A neutralizing agent enters your poisoned eye.
You've been purged. No residual damage. Lucky.

You're so lucky.
You'll stay a few more months.
We will kiss, fight, kiss again.
Then one day you will turn left
when you should have turned right.

Over, done, a life gone. 25.
Widowed at 22. Happy. Me.
But I tell no one. I just cry.